

Mine Cave-In, January 12, 1846, Carbondale, PA, USA

By S. Robert Powell

Site: Old No. 1 Shaft (in No. 1 and 2 Drifts), near Pike and Sand Streets; 60 men trapped, 15 lives lost. Roof fall covering nearly 40 acres; some of the bodies were never found, one was found by a miner working in the No. 1 operation in the 1920s. Alexander Bryden rescued two miners: Mine Foreman John Hosie (brought out after being trapped for more than 60 hours) and Dennis O'Farrell (leg broken by a large piece of coal violently shot from a pillar by the great pressure of the strata overhead).

The Basic Texts:

1. A reprint of the obituary of Alexander Bryden that was originally published in the August 25, 1854 issue of the *Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal* (p. 2), and reprinted on page 3 of the March 8, 1873 issue of the *Carbondale Advance*. Included in that obituary is a description of the 1846 mine cave-in that was written by the Henry S. Randell, Esq. and published in the August 12, 1846 issue of the *Courtland (N. Y.) Democrat*. Here is that obituary, preceded by the lead-in that was provided by *Carbondale Advance* in 1873: "We copy the following by request, but very cheerfully, from the *Carbondale Transcript* of August 25th, 1854. It will interest our readers, as a just tribute to a former excellent citizen, and as an important and interesting part of the local history of our town: / **DIED--** / In this city, on Sunday, 20th instant, of dysentery, ALEXANDER BRYDEN, Esq., in the 55th year of his age. / Mr. Bryden was born in Ayrshire, Scotland. He made this country his home, attracted more by an ardent admiration of the Republican institutions of our government, than by any desire of wealth or distinction or the mere love of adventure, which actuates many to such untrodden shores. / The prominent characteristics of the man, while living, were a highly cultivated social nature; an extreme sensitiveness to the sufferings of others; an almost reckless unselfishness in the hour of danger; an unswerving regard for truth, amounting nearly to idolatry, and an inflexible sense of right and justice--scorning ever all artifice and indirection. Overlaying and adorning these qualities was that charm of modesty, ever accompanying true merit, and which, while it rendered him the most gentle and unassuming of men, disarmed even malice itself of the desire to sully, with the faintest breath, the spotless purity of his reputation. / In his business relations with the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company as Superintendent of the mines, he is understood to have given perfect satisfaction, as well as to all those under his control and superintendence. / His funeral was attended by a very large concourse of our citizens, by his brethren of the Order of Odd Fellows, by the entire city Fire Department (he being Chief Engineer), and by many sorrowing friends from the adjacent towns. In his death this community has met with an irreparable loss: one which may well be regarded as a public calamity. The workingmen have buried a friend equally ready to counsel and assist; but his family have suffered a deeper bereavement--they weep a husband and father 'gone to that bourne whence no traveler returns,' and have a just claim

upon the sympathy of the whole community. / As the best practical commentary which it is in our power to make upon the character of our deceased friend, we copy from a number of the *Courtland* (N. Y.) *Democrat* published August 12th, 1846, a description written by Henry S. Randall, Esq., of an incident in the life of Alexander Bryden which can never be effaced from the memory of our citizens, until they, in their turn shall have followed him to his last resting place. /

* * * * *

'A point in the mines had begun to 'work,' in miners' phrase, that is, to crack and give indications of an approaching 'fall,' some days prior to the catastrophe. But it ultimately came sooner, and extended over a much larger space, than was anticipated. Bryden was at the pump-house, and observing an unusual commotion, at the mouth of the mines, proceeded to ascertain the cause of it. Men 'whispered with white lips' of some terrible disaster, but no one could give him any intelligible account of it. He entered one of the galleries, and soon met three men who informed him that a portion of the mines had fallen in, and that they had left behind sixteen or eighteen men, who were already crushed, or shut out forever from the light of day. They besought him to retire, as there was no hope or possibility of rescuing their comrades. The gallant Scotchman hesitated not one instant. He flew along the passages, the roar and crash of the splitting and grinding rocks every moment sounding louder and nearer to his ears. He reached the verge of the 'fall.' The superincumbent mountain was heaving and rending, as if an earthquake were tearing its rocky strata. Vast masses of slate were detaching themselves, and falling into the passages, with reports like the loudest thunder. Into these choked passages, amid the falling rocks, the noble-hearted Scotchman rushed on. The passage is entirely closed--no; --the huge slabs have fallen so as to leave a narrow opening in the angle formed by an angle of the floor and one of the sides of the gallery. On his hands and knees he creeps on. Now the opening has diminished so that he absolutely forces his way along with no hands and feet, lying nearly prostrate on his face! / About a mile from the mouth of the mine, he found the eighteen men in a gallery or heading where there was solid coal all about them, and oh! joy of joys! his own son [Andrew, age 19 at the time; he later served, for more than 50 years, as a superintendent for the Pennsylvania Coal Company in the Pittston area; he died in Carbondale in 1901 at the age of 74] was among them! Bryden was on the point of leading out the men, when he learned that another lay wounded in a chamber four or five hundred feet off, in the most dangerous part of the 'fall.' Was it his brother?--was it his bosom friend?--was it a wealthy or influential man, who might advance his rescuer's interest, who lay there helpless, to die a miserable death? He was a common laborer--a poor Irishman. Mr. Bryden had satisfied, nay more than satisfied, the calls of duty and humanity. If the love of praise had stimulated him, (which it did not,) he had earned enough. If the father had felt a premonition that he might be struggling for his child, that child was found. The man was badly wounded, and might only be carried out to die. Was he not, bound now to take heed for his own safety--to lead and guard his own recovered son back through the perilous path? Not thus did that great heart commune with itself. With a word of indignant censure to the men for not bearing their wounded comrade with themselves to the gallery where found them, [emphasis added] he pointed out their path, bade them escape, and then turning back, entered a path more

perilous and difficult than his preceding one. He nears the chamber. A cry from the wounded and prostrate man, who descried his advancing light, brings him to his side. Mangled and helpless, he could not stand, and shrieked with pain as he was lifted up. When placed on Bryden's back, he had not even strength to hold himself on. The former, placing the flaccid arms of the wounded man around his neck, and crossing on his breast, grasped them with one hand, his miner's lamp with the other, and thus commenced retracing his steps! For rods he bore him on his hands and knees! When the rocks were too low even for this, and could not be clambered over, he partially dragged him, and the man, who was now somewhat revived, partially assisted himself! Thus through perils which no man can appreciate, who has not strode through those gloomy caverns, he bore him a full mile--bore him to the light of day and to safety! What is the bravery of the warrior, excited by the hope of glory, / '---the neighing steed and the shrill trump, / The spirit-stirring drum, and the ear-piercing fife, / The royal banner; and all quality, / Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' / to the disinterested heroism of this act! The Romans awarded a *civic crown*, the highest military reward, to him who saved the life of a citizen. He who bore it took his seat next the Senators in the theatre, and those haughty warriors and sages rose up, to honor him as he entered. Shall no testimonial perpetuate the memory of an act by which the lives of *eighteen* American citizens were saved from peril more imminent than that of the battle field, or any of those ordinary casualties, where man risks his life for his fellow man?

* * * * *

His form, though well knit and sinewy, betokens no extraordinary physical power. A placid gray eye, a well arched nose, curling locks of light brown escaping under his Scotch cap--intonations of voice, modulated to 'more than woman's mildness'--a reserved, modest, and unassuming demeanor, are external traits which would strike any observer; and perhaps few could see, under this unpretending exterior, the man who could do and dare what he has done and dared! But there is a firmness in those gentle tones, a deep earnestness and truthfulness--a quiet but unwavering decision--an utter merging of self--a gushing tenderness of feeling, which pervade the whole man, which, would lead the deeper analyst of character, to expect the legitimate manifestations of these united traits. A high sense of duty and overflowing humanity, it was, and was alone, which prompted his heart and his hand in that dreadful hour.' " (*Carbondale Advance*, March 8, 1873, p. 3)

- In September 1899, P. S. Joslin contributed a series of articles to the *Carbondale Leader* on the early history of Carbondale. In the article in that series titled "**CARBONDALE IN ITS I[N]FANCY. / A Series of Articles on the Early Days of the Anthracite City by One of Its Pioneers,**" published on September 16, 1899, p. 2, Joslin presents biographical sketches of Alexander Bryden and John Hosie, co-superintendents of the D&H mines. Here is P. S. Joslin's biographical portrait of Alexander Bryden: "Alexander Bryden was born in Daily Parish, Ayrshire, Scotland March 6, 1799. He was brought up about the coal mines of Ayrshire and became a coal miner, shaft sinker and mine foreman. / In the year 1836 he leased a coal work upon the Polquhirter estate at New Cumrock, Ayrshire. He also leased a coal work upon the Downieston estate, at Patna, which was drowned out by the River Doon breaking into it. / In the year 1842 he emigrated to America, and came direct to Carbondale. In July of that year, work was very dull, and hard to get about the mines, and he took such work as he could get. His first work for the Delaware & Hudson Canal company was with Hugh Brown, foreman of day laborers, but very soon he was given charge of the pumps which drained the water from the deep mines. / In March 1843, he was appointed mine foreman, to take the place of Archibald Law, who was permanently disabled by a fall of roof and coal.

[The e-mail given below was received from out of the blue on the CHS&M webpage e-mail on 09-01-09:

September 1, 2009

MALCOLM LAW
7686 FORRESTAL RD
SAN DIEGO, CA 92120

Daytime Phone : 619 265 0950

Evening Phone : 619 265 0950

Email : MALJOYL@COX.NET

I am the great-great grandson of Archbald Law born in Wanlockhead, Scotland in 1799. In Scotland he trained and worked as a mining engineer. In 1830, he emmigrated to the United States and settled in Carbondale, Pa. and was employed by the Delaware and Hudson Coal Company as a mining engineer. Mr. Law put in the first underground mines for the D&H Coal Company replacing strip mining then in vogue with a vertical shaft. During an inspection of mine pumps Mr. Law was injured by a fall of rock leaving him in considerable pain and with paralysis of his lower limbs. Mr. John Wurtz, President of the D&H Coal Company called to see him and had a wagon especially built for him and had him transported to

New York City to see Dr. Valentine Mott. Unfortunately Dr. Mott was unable to relieve him of his pain and suffering. Mr. Law died in June 1848. Mr. Law's innovative engineering transforming anthracite mining methods was commemorated with a monument located in Carbondale on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the city of Carbondale. (I have a picture of the monument on my computer)

[SRP reply]

09-01-09

Dear Mr. Law:

We are very pleased to have the information about Archibald Law, very pleased indeed. Thank you.

The monument of which you speak still stands on the site of the first deep underground anthracite mine in America, and we are very proud to have such an important historic site in Carbondale.

We would be very pleased to have an electronic copy of the photo of which you speak.

[Mr. Law sent a copy of the photo he has. Here is a portion of my reply of 09-02-09 to him: "The monument in the photo that you have (in the form of an obelisk) is located in Carbondale's Gravity Park. It is a commemorative monument that was erected in the 20th century by the D&H (after the Gravity Railroad closed in 1899) in the middle of what was formerly Plane No. 1 on the Gravity Railroad. / It is not the monument, erected in 1901, when the City of Carbondale as an incorporated entity was 50 years old, that marks the site of the first deep underground anthracite mine in America (which was opened in 1831). That is the monument in the two photos that I sent to you--located just west of the 7th Avenue crossing of the D&H, on Carbondale's West Side.]

In Carbondale's oldest cemetery, Maplewood Cemetery, eleven members of the Law family are interred. Attached is a copy of the relevant page from the interment records.

The cause of death, in the interment records for Archibald Law, who died on July 4, 1848 at age 51, is given as "Hurt in Mines." The Widow Law" in the interment records, who died at the age of 79 on February 7, 1876 is probably the widow of Archibald Law. Her cause of death is given as "old age - pneumonia."

Sincerely,

S. Robert Powell]

I sent a copy of the above e-mail to John Buberniak, who included the following information in his reply of 09-01-09:

"Was the chief engineer in Scotland of the Duke of Buccleuh, and he came to this country on the invitation of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad to take charge of their extensive mining operations. This was in 1830, when he was thirty-one years of age, and to him is due the praise for the introduction of the present method."

Most interestingly, Alexander Bryden, like Archibald Law, was a "shaft sinker and mine foreman" in Scotland before he emigrated to the United States: ". . . Alexander Bryden was born in Daily Parish, Ayrshire, Scotland March 6, 1799. He was brought up about the coal mines of Ayrshire and became a coal miner, shaft sinker and mine foreman. / In the year 1836 he leased a coal work upon the Polquhirter estate at New Cumrock, Ayrshire. He also leased a coal work upon the Downieston estate, at Patna, which was drowned out by the River Doon breaking into it. / In the year 1842 he emigrated to America, and came direct to Carbondale. . ."

He continued in that position until the beginning of the year 1852, when he removed to Pittston, to take charge of the Pittston Coal company's work at that place. He held that position until the first of January, 1854, when he was appointed mining superintendent of the Delaware & Hudson canal company's mines, which position he held until his death on the 20th of August, 1854. / At his death he left a widow and twelve children. Mrs. Bryden and four of the children have since died. The children still living, in order of their ages, are Andrew, Catherine, widow of William Law, Adam, William, Mary, Mrs. Edward Inch, Margaret, Mrs. Martin Holdich, Janet, Mrs. O. P. Miller and John A. / We do not know what his education advantages were in Scotland, but here he exhibited a literary turn of mind, and in order to avail himself of the benefit of the best literature and history of current events, he with the aid of Mr. Clarkson, succeeded in founding a circulating library of the foreign and domestic quarterly and monthly magazines. He interested a large number of the miners and mechanics in the enterprise, by which means, at a small expense to each, every one had access to all the current literature of the day. / One of the events which will keep in memory

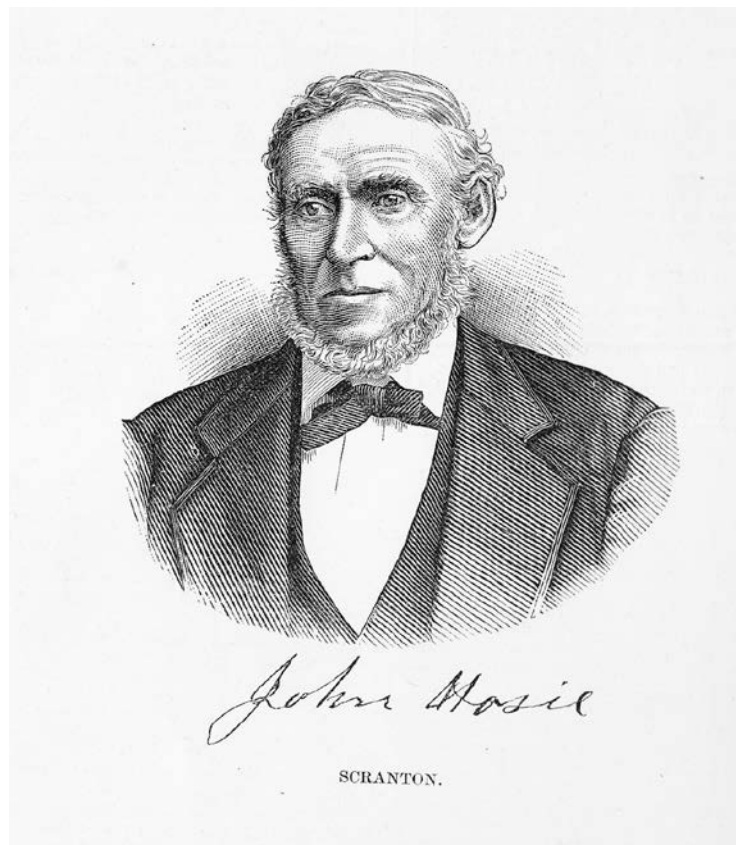
his fearlessness in time of danger is that fatal fall of rock and coal in the mines here on the 12th day of January, 1846. About forty acres of the roof gave way, crushing props and pillars. The men had just gone into work, and fourteen were crushed to death, one of the mine superintendents, John Hosie, was entombed with the others. Mr. Bryden did not relax his efforts to relieve any one who might be living. After about forty-eight hours, Mr. Hosie came within hearing distance. Mr. Bryden had to crawl through a very narrow opening and over fallen coal and rock to get to him. He carried him, when he could and drew him over places where they could not stand, until they reached the outside. Mr. Bryden stated that after so long a time had elapsed since the fall, he could hear the cracking of the coal and rock, showing that it was still settling over them. / Next week we expect to give a vivid account of that disaster written by Andrew Bryden, a son of Alexander Bryden, who was also in the mine at the time. . ." (*Carbondale Leader*, September 16, 1899, p. 2)

In the biographical portrait of John Hosie that is given in 1880 (p. 438J; written and published during Hosie's lifetime) is the following description of John Hosie's entrapment and escape from the 1846 mine cave in: "January 12th, 1846, occurred a most thrilling and memorable event in the life of Mr. Hosie, which put to the full test the indomitable will and magnificent pluck of the man, so strongly shadowed forth in the boy, and which at the time was heralded to the farthest limits of civilization. About 8 o'clock in the morning of that day he went into Mine No 2 level at Carbondale. He had been in the mine less than an hour when about forty acres of the overhanging rocks and earth caved in. He was alone and very near the center of this fall. Fifteen miners in other parts of the mine were instantly killed by the concussion of the air. [emphasis added] Mr. Hosie was saved from instant death by the refuse coal which is ordinarily left on the bottom of the mine. As it was he was pressed between the fallen rocks and the bottom of the mine, with barely space left for his prostrate body. In utter darkness, with nothing but his bare hands to work with, for twenty-four hours, every one of which seemed an age, he dug for his life, throwing behind him the fallen debris and refuse coal upon which the fallen mass rested. His fingers were worn to the bone and still bear the marks of the terrible struggle. At length he reached a place where he could stand up, only to find, however, he was still inside the fall. He attempted to reach the air shaft, but did not succeed. It finally occurred to him that by following the break in the overhanging rocks made next to the line of solid coal he might work his way to the main entrance. Following up this thought he finally, after having been literally buried in this living tomb for forty-eight hours, effected his escape. He had been given up for dead, as it was known he was in the very center of the fall, having been seen there by a mule driver as he was passing along just previous to the fall. He met a party of miners before reaching the entrance, who had entered the mine for the purpose of digging for his body. Instead, they found a pretty lively corpse in the person of Mr. Hosie himself approaching them. The news of his escape sent a thrill of joy throughout the country. It would not be in the power of pen to describe the feelings of the young wife, who had given her husband up for lost, when the glad tidings were borne to her that he was yet alive."

More on John Hosie:

John Hosie, born June 3, 1812 in Sterlingshire, Scotland, worked with James Archbald and the D&H beginning in 1843, when “he engaged, under James Archbald, in the management of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company’s Railroad from Carbondale to Honesdale, and during the two years he was thus employed he repaired the masonry on the company’s canal. In 1845 he accepted the position of assistant superintendent, under James Archbald, of the Delaware and Hudson coal mines at Carbondale.” (1880, p. 438J).

Hosie worked for the D&H until 1850, at which point he became general superintendent for the Pennsylvania Coal Company, taking charge of their mines at Pittston and Dunmore, a position which he filled until 1854. In 1872 John Hosie built the Fairlawn colliery at Scranton, and operated it until his death (May 7, 1881), at which time his sons took over the operation of the colliery. In 1877 he became a partner in the Pierce Coal Company at Winton. In 1880 he was that company’s general manager. The earthly remains of John Hosie and his wife, Julia A. Hosie (June 6, 1822—November 4, 1879) are interred in Dunmore Cemetery, Dunmore, PA. Given below is the likeness of John Hosie that accompanies his biographical portrait in 1880:



2. **"The Mine Disaster of 1846.** / Many of our older citizens remember very distinctly the particulars of that terrible calamity in our mines in the year 1846. But others, embracing a large majority of our present residents, are not acquainted with the details of the catastrophe. / As a matter of interest to all, we again spread out the whole matter in our columns. We commenced last week, with the sketch of A. Bryden Esq., written soon after by Hon. Henry S. Randall; we follow this the present week by the sketch written by Rev. Henry A. Rowland, then Pastor of the Presbyterian church in Honesdale, and the account of it given in the *Carbondale Democrat* at the time. By these combined, a condensed and reliable account of the catastrophe will be obtained, and in a good shape for preservation." (*Carbondale Advance*, March 15, 1873, p. 3) Here are the two articles referenced in this cover article from the March 15, 1873 issue of the *Carbondale Advance* that were published in that same issue of the *Carbondale Advance*:

3. Account of the accident that was originally published in the *Carbondale Democrat* on January 16, 1846 (four days after the cave in; SRP: Do we have that issue of the *Carbondale Democrat*? The original article was removed from the bound volume by someone before the bound volumes came under the care of the Historical Society). Here is the original account of the accident from the January 16, 1846 *Carbondale Democrat*: **"DREADFUL CATASTROPHE!!! --Upwards of SIXTY Persons buried alive! FOURTEEN still missing!** -- About nine o'clock, on Monday morning, an accident occurred in the mines, in our village, more appalling and dreadful than any that have before taken place here, or that has come within the knowledge of the eldest among us. The roof the mines fell in almost simultaneously, to the extent of a half mile, or upwards in length, and about forty rods in width--burying in its fall, or shutting up in subterranean caverns, about 60 workmen--Of these 46 have escaped through the various chambers, some with little injury, others severely wounded, but sad to relate, *fourteen*--dead or alive--are still imprisoned in the bowels of the earth. / The No. 1 mines had been 'working' (i.e., the pillars had been groaning, or cracking, under the weight of the mountain that rested upon them,) for some days, but as the phenomenon was not new, nothing serious was apprehended from it. The effect of such 'workings' is generally inconsiderable, extending but a few yards and producing no other danger or inconvenience, than what is occasioned by the falling of pieces of slate, of which even there is sufficient warning, to enable one to escape from its reach. / On Monday morning of the present week, Mr. Clarkson, the mining Engineer, went into the mines, before the hour of commencing work, to examine their condition. Though all seemed quiet, to increase the safety, some additional props with roofings were ordered to be put up. The workmen had been but a short time in the mines, when a heavy cloud of smoke, and dust, were seen rushing out of mouths of that and the adjoining mine, attended with a current of air sufficient to remove cars, large stones &c. with its force. Workmen, that were then entering, were raised from their feet, and thrown violently backward against pillars and other objects, many of them receiving severe wounds. / A driver, Patrick Clark, had his horse instantly killed, and he was thrown so violently against the cars, as to break several bones, and cause his death the next day. Hugh Fitzpatrick and John M'Kale were severely hurt in the same manner. Dennis Farrell, was nearly killed by stones falling upon him. His brother to relieve him ran for an iron bar, and has not been seen since--he has probably perished. Mr. F. was afterwards extricated from the stones by two other men, and

placed against the side of the mine, where being wholly disabled, he was left, while they ran for their lives, from under the falling mass. He was afterwards brought out by Mr. Bryden, Assistant Engineer, though at great peril to himself. Mr. Bryden deserves great credit for his courageous and energetic efforts to save those who were involved in this calamity. / Mr. John Hosie, an overseer, was for 48 hours supposed to have been lost--but, after encountering numberless dangers, and difficulties, was enabled to work his way out. An account of his adventures, while it would be of much interest, we are obliged to omit. Having been but recently married, the feelings of his wife during the time, may be imagined but cannot be described. / The following named persons are still confined to the mines. It may be that some of them are still living, but there being little hopes of reaching them in less time than one week, but a faint prospect appears of recovering them alive. Their names are, Patrick Leonard, Henry Moore, James Magrath, Patrick Walker, Patrick Mitchell, John Brennan, Peter Cawley, Anthony Walsh, Mark Brennan, William Clines, Michael Tolan, Henry Devany, John Farrell, and Ebenezer Williams; the first thirteen are Irishmen, the latter a Welchman. All leave families, dependent upon their labor. Patrick Walker, John Brennan and Patrick Clarke, were the support of widowed mothers. / The Company have placed different sets of hands on the roads leading to where these unfortunate men are supposed to be, who labor with unremitting energy night and day to effect a passage through the ponderous masses of slate and earth. No greater efforts for their recovery, could perhaps be made than are making--every avenue of access has been explored, and the most efficient means adopted to effect the object."

4. The *Carbondale Democrat* article from January 16, 1846 was also republished, with an editor's introduction, in the *Carbondale Leader* of Tuesday, January 5, 1886 (p. 4). Here is the introduction to the *Leader's* reprint (1886) of the *Carbondale Democrat's* January 16, 1846 article: "Commenting on the recent terrible mine accident at Nanticoke, the *Scranton Truth* refers incidentally to a similar catastrophe which occurred in Carbondale many years ago. The *Truth* fixes the time in 'the winter of 1843,' which is an error of three years.[The *Truth* was perhaps relying on either (1) H. Hollister's *History of the Lackawanna Valley*, published in 1875, in which Dr. Hollister erroneously reports (p. 364) that "During the winter of 1843 or '44, a portion of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's mines, at Carbondale, 'fell in' upon the workmen. . ." or (2) J. A. Clark's *The Wyoming Valley, Upper Waters of the Susquehanna, and the Lackawanna Coal-Region, including Views of the Natural Scenery of Northern Pennsylvania, from the Indian Occupancy to the year 1875* (1875: J. A. Clark, publisher, Scranton, PA) in which, in his 28th chapter, "Delaware and Hudson Canal Company (pp. 106-154), Clark, like Hollister, both published in 1875, incorrectly gives the date of the great Carbondale mine cave-in as 1843-44: ". . . But an unfortunate event occurred during the winter of 1843-44, by which sixteen lives were lost. The roof of a portion of the mines. . ." (p. 143). Interestingly, the body of Clark's account (pp. 143-44) is an exact copy, fully acknowledged, from Hollister (pp. 364-66). Hollister's account of the accident, it should be noted, although interesting to read, is more imagined than empirically observed, and somewhat melodramatic in its presentation: ". . . Others, without water, food, or light, shut in from the world forever by the appalling wall of rock, coal, and slate around them, while breathing the scanty air, and suffering in body and mind, agony the

most intense, clenched tighter their picks, and wildly labored one night that knew no day, until exhausted they sank, and died in the darkness of their rocky sepulchers, with no sweet voice to soothe, no kind angel to cool the burning temples, or catch the whispers from the spirit land. " (p. 144).] It occurred January 12, 1846. Inasmuch as this accident (which was at that time the most fatal in its results of any similar one in this country) is often spoken of, and many inquiries are made as to the particulars, and especially as we hear and read occasionally incorrect accounts of it, we have thought best to draw upon Esquire Yarrington's files (which he has courteously permitted) and reproduce the statement published a few days after the occurrence. Its perusal will bring to the minds of our older citizens (as it has to that of the writer) in a vivid manner, the terrible agony and suspense which our whole population endured during the time that efforts were made to relieve the entombed miners, and the inexpressible joy when the news came that Mr. Hosie had been rescued. / The following is the account taken from the *Carbondale Democrat*, of Jan. 16, 1846, published by Joslin & Benedict:-- . . ."

5. Account of the cave-in that was written, January 15, 1846 (three days after the cave in) by Rev. Henry A. Rowland, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Honesdale at the time of the cave-in, and originally published in the *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser* (and reprinted in the March 5 1873 issue of the *Wilkes-Barre Record* from a copy of the article in the *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser* that was included in a scrap book in the possession of Ziba Bennett, Esq.). Here is the complete article from the March 5, 1873 issue of the *Wilkes-Barre Record*, as reprinted in the March 15, 1873 issue, p. 1, of the *Carbondale Advance*: "The *Wilkes-Barre Record* of March 5th says: 'We are permitted to make the following extract from a scrap book in the possession of Ziba Bennett, Esq. Most of our readers do not know, or have forgotten about the cave in at Carbondale, in 1846--the most serious disaster in the coal mines of this region until Avondale. Mr. John Hosie, the hero of the following narrative, called at our office last week, and gave a thrilling description of his difficulties and his feelings while working his way out of the mine. He is now a healthy, vigorous man, with apparently many years of life before him. His adventure at Carbondale, did not frighten him away from the mines, as he is still engaged in the coal business.' / (From the *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.) / **LIVING BURIAL AND ESCAPE.** / For the subjoined graphic account of the remarkable disaster a[t] Carbondale, and the almost miraculous escape of a man who was buried in the crushed mines, we are indebted to the Rev. Mr. Rowland, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Honesdale, but formerly of the Pearl Street Church in this city. The narrative is equally interesting and extraordinary: / 'Honesdale, Jan. 15, 1846. / On Monday morning last, about nine o'clock, an accident occurred in the coal mines of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company, at Carbondale, which has produced considerable excitement in the community. A large portion of the hill or mountain into which the mines extend, following the law of gravity, suddenly descended on the honey-comb cavities within its bosom, burying all the unfortunate victims within its reach. Very many acres descended in a mass; and so great was the pressure of the atmosphere, occasioned by this descent as to shoot out from the mouth of one of the mines, as from the mouth of a cannon, a train of cars with a horse and a boy, throwing them to considerable distance. Think of a bellows moved by mountain power, and you form a very correct idea of the blast. Painful to relate, fifteen individuals were

beneath the descending mass, only one of whom has had the good fortune to escape; and his adventures exceeded anything on record. The remaining fourteen are buried alive, if not crushed, and may be now hopelessly wandering in those gloomy caverns, beyond the reach of human aid, and shut out for ever, in all probability, from the light of day. / To present a distinct idea of the occurrence, I must give a brief description of the mines and the manner of working them. There are several openings to the coal, which are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4; &c.; two of them are above the bed of the Lackawanna, the others are below it. These openings are holes in the side of the hill, about six feet by eight, and the main entrances to the mines. From these mouths are roads leading into the interior of the mountain, following the dip of coal, sometimes ascending and sometimes descending. The extent of the mining operations will be perceived from the fact that there are thirty-five miles of railroad laid under ground, in the bosom of the mountain, including the main roads with all their ramifications. / The coal lies in a horizontal stratum of from four to six feet in thickness, between strata of slate. The method of mining is, to cut out and remove the coal, leaving only piers of it to support the hill above, aided by wooden props made of sections of trees, cut of suitable length. As fast as the coal is removed, the lateral branches of the road are abandoned, and the main avenues pushed on to the coal beyond. In this way the coal has been removed for a mile and a half under the mountain, and the roads extend that distance. About a mile from the mouth of No. 1, an air-hole was cut to the surface, up an inclined plane, by which access could be had to the surface of the earth, and down which props were taken. The excavation for coal extends half a mile or more beyond this opening. It was in this vicinity that the accident occurred, and by closing the mouth of this passage cut off all hope of escape to those within in this direction. / As fast as the coal is removed, no particular care is taken to support the mass above, in the chambers which are abandoned; the props are left to decay that the rock and earth may gradually settle down and fill up these cavities, as it has done in former instances; but care is taken to guard the main avenues to the coal from being thus obstructed. / The coal lies beneath a mass of slate; above the slate is the sand stone rock, and above this are the gravel and soil. I have often noticed, in passing through the mines, that many of the ends of the props, which support the slate above, were shivered like a broom, from the vast pressure on them; and I never saw this indication without thinking what might happen should the mass from above take a notion suddenly to descend, and always breathed easier when I had passed through the mines and emerged to the light of day. / Symptoms of the working of the mass above have been for some time observed; and these symptoms had greatly increased for a few days previous to the catastrophe. Everything was done which could be done in these circumstances to avert danger. No one supposed that the rock above would prove so firm or that it would settle suddenly or in a mass. / Only a few workmen, of whom there are nearly four hundred employed in the mines, had gone in the mines on Monday morning, when Mr. Clarkson, the superintendent, discovered the ominous appearances, and immediately set some hands to work in propping up the slate. On coming out of the mines, about 8 1/2 o'clock, he met Mr. John Hosie, (who is well known on the Croton water- works as one of the ablest masons, and who has been in the Delaware and Hudson Canal Co.'s employment about a year, preparing himself to take charge of the new mines to be opened below Carbondale,) and told him that he had better wait till he could go with him, and they would examine the mines together. / Mr. Hosie went on, however, into

No. 2 intending to join Mr. Clarkson presently, and had proceeded about a mile when instantly the mountain over his head had descended with an awful crush of everything which opposed its progress and shot down over him, filling up the road with crushed coal and bending him double, leaving not a foot of space between the solid mass above and the crushed coal below. The distance descended was the height of the mine, or from six feet to eight feet. So great was the pressure of the air that it produced a painful sensation, as if some sharp instrument had been thrust into his ears. All was total darkness, every light in the mine being instantly extinguished. Ever and anon the thunder of the falling masses roared through the caverns. After waiting a suitable length of time for the rocks to cease falling, Mr. Hosie began to remove the loose material around him and to creep. He tried one way and it was closed. He then proceeded in the other direction; and after nine hours' incessant toil, creeping, removing loose coal and slate, and squeezing himself past obstacles, he made his way into the open mine. Here he tried to strike a light, but his matches had become damp and would not ignite. He then felt around him and discovered by the direction of the railroad that instead of making his way out, he had gone farther into the mine, and was cut off from a return by the mass which had settled down upon the road. He then bethought him of the air-hole, and attempted to reach it; but that passage had been crushed in and closed. Being in the vicinity of the mining operation he found some powder, and spreading it on the floor, endeavored with a pick to ignite it, but could not. He found also a can of oil, which he reserved in case of necessity to use for food. / All was total darkness, and the part of the mountain over him was also settling, throwing off huge pieces of slate, and exposing him to imminent danger at every step; for but a part of the mass above had come down at once, and the other seemed likely to follow. Sensible of his danger, Mr. Hosie protected himself as well as he could; he wound up his watch and felt the time by his hands. He also, with a piece of chalk, wrote in different places his name and the hour when he was at certain points. Being in total darkness, however, he missed his way, but was enabled through his acquaintance with the mines to set himself right. He first tried to reach No. 1, but after toiling to that road, found that it was also crushed in. His only chance seemed to proceed at right angles with the main arteries of the mines and pass over to No. 3, and this he labored to do in accordance with his best judgment. / At one time he passed through a narrow entrance into a chamber, and in endeavoring to creep out on the other side, he was caught in a narrow place by the hill above settling down upon him, and remained in this position about an hour, expecting to die there. But another settling of mass crushed out some of the materials around him, and he was enabled to free himself and draw back into the chamber of the mine. In returning, however, to the hole by which he had effected his entrance, found to his dismay that it was closed; and he was compelled to hunt a new passage, and finally to dig his way out with his hands. / Thus, after working for more than 36 hours, he at length reached No. 3, where he rested, and then when the hill had partially ceased its working, preceded toward the mouth of the mines. On his way he met Mr. Bryden, one of the superintendents, who, with his men, was exploring the cavern with lights in search of him; and at about five o'clock in the morning he emerged to the light of day, having been given up as dead, and been incarcerated in utter darkness beneath a settling mountain for forty-eight hours. Mr. Hosie told me many of these particulars, and the others I gleaned from the principal officers of the Company, to whom they were narrated. / At one time Mr. Hosie saw lights at a distance, but

they soon vanished. They were the lights of the men in No. 3, seeking for him. These lights, however, assured him that he was pursuing the right course. Mr. Hosie's hands were scratched and cut up by working, so as to be completely covered with sores. He never for one moment lost his self possession, and to this fact, added to his tact and perseverance, is to be ascribed his deliverance. / There were about forty men in the mines when the catastrophe occurred, and the twenty-six who escaped owed their preservation in a great measure, to Mr. Bryden, one of the superintendents, who conducted them out with great coolness and self possession, while portions of the hill, other than those which first fell, were settling down around them. Learning that one poor Irish laborer, who had been struck down by slate, was left, with his leg broken, he went back alone and brought him out. Sometimes he was compelled to creep and draw the man after him, through crevices which were soon after closed by the settling of the hill. In two hours more the whole had shut down, so that if he had been left his death would have been inevitable. Thanks to Mr. Bryden for his coolness, intrepidity and humanity. / The greatest possible efforts are now made by working night and day to reach the place where the fourteen were at work; but faint hopes, however, are cherished respecting them. The places cannot be reached before the middle of next week, if then. The probability is that they have been crushed to death. Most of them are men with families. One boy is only known with certainty to be dead. / Except for the loss of life, this unforeseen occurrence is not much to be regretted, nor will it greatly impede the company's operations, since it has occurred at about the time when it is usual to suspend labor for a couple of months to repair for the spring, and everything will be rectified before then. The immense strength of the rock above prevented the hill from settling in the usual way; but now it is down, it is to be rejoiced at as it frees from future danger, and the roads when reopened will be perfectly secure. It was an innovation for it to come down suddenly and in a mass, instead of the quiet, decent way it has adopted in former instances, and no human foresight could have predicted the manner of its descent, nor could human prudence, in the present state of knowledge, have provided against it. / The quantity of the mountain fallen is variously estimated. Mr. Bryden said that it was about three-quarters of a mile long, by half a mile in width. Mr. Clarkson said that it was about half mile long, and an eighth wide. In the former case it would be about 240 acres, and in the latter 40 acres. Mr. Archbald, the chief superintendent of the mines and railroad, whose science and practical skills are not exceeded, estimates the amount fallen at far less than either of his assistants. Since the first avalanche, it must be borne in mind; however, many other portions have gone down. What the extent of the whole is, no one can conjecture, with any approximation of certainty; and it is exceedingly difficult at present to get any information respecting it. / I do not know that the company have any interest either to magnify or conceal the matter, inasmuch as it is more likely to prove a benefit than damage to their future operations. The only expense attending it will be to repair the roads and move the obstructions; but these will then be the safer, and the knowledge acquired by this experience may prove of the greatest utility hereafter. / The occurrence seemed to me so unlike anything I ever heard of, that I commenced writing the account of it to my friends, but it has proved so long, that, to save multiplications of letters, I concluded to send it to your paper, which most of them are accustomed to read; and they may, if they choose, consider it as personally addressed to each of

them. There may be others of your readers also to whom it may not be uninteresting. / With sentiments of respect, I am yours, / H. A. ROWLAND."

John Hosie (born 06-03-1812, died 05-07-1881; wife, Julia A. Hosie;
both interred in Dunmore Cemetery, Dunmore, PA)

6. "MORE OF THE ACCIDENT. / Since our last paper went to press, the bodies of Patrick Mitchell, Wm. Clines, and Ebenezer Williams have been taken from the mines." (*Carbondale Democrat*, February 6, 1846, p. 2). The earthly remains of Ebenezer Williams were buried in Maplewood Cemetery. See the data from the Maplewood Cemetery interment records given hereafter:

Burial No. 394 (burial made after January 14, 1846 and before February 13, 1846) in the "Record of Interments, &c., Maplewood Cemetery, Carbondale, Lackawanna Co., Pa." reads as follows:

"Williams	Found Dead	Welch"
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The earthly remains of Patrick Mitchell and William Clines are now interred in the New Catholic Cemetery (Russell Park), Carbondale.

Alexander Bryden moves out of Carbondale in 1851

ALEXANDER BRYDEN, ESQ.--This gentleman, late a Superintendent of the mining operation of the Del. & Hud. Canal Co., in this place, is, we regret to learn, about removing from our community to take charge of the works of another company, recently organized, farther down the valley. By the native goodness of his heart, the disinterestedness of his conduct, the uniform urbanity of his manners and his sterling integrity, he has won a noble estimation in the affections and esteem of his fellow citizens generally. To the Miners, especially, he is peculiarly endeared by his courageous endeavors, braving every danger, to extricate all whom it was possible to save, from the imminent perils to which they were exposed by the "fall of the mines" some seven years ago, and the "flood in the mines" of last season. We do not believe he has an enemy on earth. The aspirations of this whole community for his future happiness and prosperity will arise to bless him in his new home. (*The Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal*, Friday, August 15, 1851, p. 2)

7. The Bryden testimonial that was held on December 8, 1851: articles in two Carbondale newspapers on the testimonial: (a) "The Bryden Testimonial" (*Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal*, December 12, 1851, p. 2); and (b) "*From the Transcript. / Presentation of a Testimonial to ALEXANDER BRYDEN, Esq., / By the Miners and Citizens of Carbondale City, at the Odd Fellows Hall, Dec. 8th, 1851.*" (*Lackawanna Citizen*, December 19, 1851, p. 2; this is a reprint of the original article for the *Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal* of the preceding week, December 12, 1851). Here is the article from the *Carbondale Transcript and*

Lackawanna Journal: "**The Bryden Testimonial.** / On Monday evening, 8th instant, a very large number of citizens assembled at the Odd Fellows Hall in this city, to witness the interesting ceremonial of the Presentation to ALEXANDER BRYDER, Esq., of a Compass and case of Mathematical Instruments by our Miners and others--to which we alluded in a former number of our paper. / An occasion of tendering to deserving worth so substantial a mark of esteem has seldom occurred, prompted as this was, by feelings of the warmest gratitude towards the recipient. All who have had the pleasure of intercourse with Mr. Bryden, will bear us witness to his correct deportment, modest demeanor and kindliness of disposition: his hand always open as day to 'melting charity,' and his best efforts always put forth to enhance the happiness of all around him, the circumstance of his removal from our midst to another sphere of usefulness seemed to call for some marked expression of the feelings of our people. It was while one of the Superintendents for the D. & H. Canal Company, that the 'Falling in of the Mines' occurred, and none will ever forget the peril he encountered--the incessant toil and perseverance which he manifested, in extricating the unfortunate victims of that fearful calamity. On other occasions he has signalized himself in rendering aid to the Miners when peril was nigh, and it would be indeed strange, if that large and respectable class did not feel a deep sense of gratitude for his manly exertions in their behalf. We are happy that worth is appreciated in our midst, and sincerely hope the 'Compass' may point us all to the polar-star of manly conduct and generous sympathy for our fellow-men, as assuredly as its undeviating course has marked the career of its recipient. / The meeting was organized by choosing Hon. JAMES ARCHBALD, as President of the evening; James Clarkson, John Lee, Edward Jones, Anthony Grady, Henry Evans, Patrick Moffit, jr., Thomas Jones, John Kirkwood, James Hamilton, Neill Fallon, William Morgan, Richard Keating, William Hughes, Terence Powderly, Patrick Kearnes and Joseph Gillespie, Vice-Presidents; and *S. S. Benedict and G. M. Reynolds*, Secretaries. / The president having stated the object of the meeting, Mr. Anthony Finnerty, in behalf of the Miners, delivered the presentation Address, which was briefly responded to by Mr. Bryden, returning his heartfelt thanks for the kind and flattering manner in which the Testimonial had been tendered him, and more at length in his behalf by Capt. Geo. R. Love. / Able addresses, pertinent to the occasion, were made by Col. Peter Byrne, Geo. Perkins, Evan Harris, Martin Canavan, F. P. Grow and A. L. Mack, Esqrs. / Capt. E. L. DANA, of Wilkesbarre, being loudly called for, rose, and in a felicitous and eloquent strain, enchaind the attention of the audience for some time. His remarks were well adapted to the time and circumstances, and none regret his presence. / S. S. Benedict, Esq., in conclusion to some happy and appropriate remarks, offered as a sentiment, the following: / *The Miners of Carbondale*--Honest men, industrious, intelligent and liberal citizens,--worthy of such an overseer as Alexander Bryden, Esq., whose services they so long enjoyed and so well appreciated. May his successor ever treat them with equal fairness and win just as highly upon their regard. / Before adjourning, the subjoined Resolution, offered by Lewis Pughe, Esq., was unanimously adopted: / *Resolved*, That the thanks of this meeting be tendered to the Committee of Arrangements for their disinterested labor in bring[ing] about so happy an 'event' as the one we now have the pleasure of participating in. An occasion where honesty, industry and perseverance, receives a *token of merit* from the hard-working, honest yeomanry of the D. & H.

Company's Mines. / The ceremonies at the Hall being concluded, a 'goodlie companie' adjourned to the Saloon of J. H. Estabrook, and partook of an oyster supper. Here the toast and jest were freely passed--and the utmost harmony mingled with the hilarity of the evening. At a seasonable hour the company dispersed, well pleased with the occasion which brought to their memory 'Days of Auld Lang Syne.' " (*Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal*, December 12, 1851, p. 2)

8. [Obituary of John Hosie] "**DEATH OF JOHN HOSIE.** / Mr. John Hosie, who was at one time prominently identified with the management of the coal mines of the D. & H. C. Company, and who was a resident of this city for a considerable period many years ago, died in Scranton last Saturday. He was a man of considerable intelligence and of indomitable energy. He was for many years, and up to the time of his death, prominently identified with the coal operations in this region. His connection with the D. & H. C. Company commenced in 1845, and a few months after, he took a thrilling part in the great mine cave in this city. For forty-eight hours he was buried in the bowels of the earth, but was unhurt, and by a series of remarkable providences, finally escaped from his perilous position. Many times during his confinement in the subterranean prison he gave himself up as lost, and each time some incident occurred which gave him new hope, and encouraged him to exert every possible effort to escape. Of seventeen persons who were then entombed, he was the only one who came out alive and many of the buried bodies were never recovered. / Mr. Hosie was sixty-nine years of age, had been a widower two years and a half, and left two sons and two daughters. The funeral ceremonies were conducted by Rev. N. G. Parke, of Pittston, one of his early pastors, who delivered an eloquent and appropriate address." (*Carbondale Leader*, May 14, 1881, p. 2)

- In September 1899, P. S. Joslin contributed a series of articles to the *Carbondale Leader* on the early history of Carbondale. In the article in that series titled "**CARBONDALE IN ITS I[N]FANCY. / A Series of Articles on the Early Days of the Anthracite City by One of Its Pioneers,**" published on September 16, 1899, p. 2, Joslin presents biographical sketches of Alexander Bryden and John Hosie, co-superintendents of the D&H mines. Here is P. S. Joslin's biographical portrait of John Hosie: "**JOHN HOSIE.** / As Mr. Hosie was co-superintendent with Mr. Bryden in the mines, we think it appropriate to give a brief sketch of his life here. / Mr. Hosie was born in Sterlingshire, Scotland, June 2, 1812. In youth, he manifested a sterling character and in manhood, like the coin of the realm was sterling worth. / His father was a mason and stone cutter by trade, which it appears the son was familiar with and worked at. His education was limited to the common schools of the neighborhood. An elder married sister, whose husband kept a hotel, made him a present of a pony, from which time, when out of school, he occupied himself in carrying parcels, and when he was fourteen years old, found he had saved about 80 pounds sterling. Then the idea came to go to America and without the knowledge of his parents he purchased a ticket for that purpose. When he informed his mother of his purpose she was surprised and wanted to know where he got his money. He satisfied her, but both

parents tried to persuade him to remain at home, but no, he wanted to go and relieve his parents from his support. Finding his mind fixed, they thought an elder brother should go with him. / When they arrived in New York they got employment, John as stone cutter and his brother Andrew as carpenter. After several months near New York, he went to Philadelphia and worked with another brother James, six years. From this time forward, he was engaged in superintending or constructing railroad bridges, viaducts, or any work in stone masonry. / In 1842 he entered the employ of the Delaware & Hudson Canal company in charge of the gravity between Carbondale and Honesdale. In 1845 he became mine superintendent at Carbondale. He was married on the 12th of November of the same year to Miss Julia A. Beattys, of Waymart. Two months after that date, Jan. 12, 1846, came the terrible cave in of the mines, in which he was entombed and imagination cannot describe the anguish of that young wife who thought she would never see him again. / After digging in the darkness with his bare hands among the broken coal and rock to try to gain a way towards some opening, he did reach a spot where he could hear the searching parties and making his presence known he was rescued by the aid of Mr. Bryden after being in the mines 48 hours. The flesh of his fingers was worn off to the bones. / Mr. Hosie left the Delaware & Hudson company's employment in 1856. His after life was an active one, being engaged as contractor or superintendent of railroads or mine work in many parts of the coal regions of the state." (*Carbondale Leader*, September 16, 1899, p. 2)

9. In September 1899, P. S. Joslin contributed a series of articles to the *Carbondale Leader* on the early history of Carbondale. In the article in that series, titled "**OUR GREAT MINE DISASTER,**" which was published in the *Carbondale Leader* on September 23, 1899, p. 2, Joslin presents the account by Andrew Bryden (one of Alexander Bryden's sons) of that mine disaster. Here is the article: "**OUR GREAT MINE DISASTER. / Andrew Bryden Describes the Fall of Roof in Nos. 1 and 2 Drifts in 1846.** / P. S. Joslin who is contributing a series of articles to the LEADER on the early days of this city is indebted for the following 'account of the fall in the mines at Carbondale Luzerne county Pa.,' to Andrew Bryden of Pittston. / 'On January 12th, 1846, about 8 o'clock in the morning a serious cave or fall of roof occurred in drifts No. 1 and 2 of the Delaware and Hudson Canal company at Carbondale, Pa., by which fourteen persons were killed, six of which were never found, although the company made great efforts to find them. The following are the names of the persons who were killed: Patrick Leonard, Henry Moore, James Magrath, Patrick Walker, Patrick Mitchell, John Brennan, Peter Crowley, Anthony Walsh, Mark Brennan, William Clines, Michael Toolan, Henry Devanney, John Farrell, Ebenezer Williams. One other person, Roderick Phillips was enclosed in the mines for about twenty-four hours when he was found by Mr. Bryden and helped out. He died suddenly of heart failure some time afterwards the cause of which was attributed to his uncomfortable confinement in the mine. The eight persons whose bodies were found were killed upon the main roads, some of whom were engaged in propping up the roof and encasing the pillars along the level heading.

Where the squeeze was the greatest when the fall came it was like a thunder clap and extended over an area of from 40 to 50 acres and over a half mile along the headings. / The bodies of the men found showed evidence of their being killed instantly. All of the bodies were found in No. 1 level and on the plane itself and those not found were upon the plane heading, or in the chambers worked from it. / When the fall occurred I was then at work at the face of the plane heading which was driven into the solid coal about two hundred feet inside of the last entrance driven up from the No. 1 level chambers. Two drivers had just come in for our car and were at the face of heading when the cave occurred. We all felt the concussion very sensibly and our lights went out, but we had no idea that such a calamity had occurred, but in passing out the heading we saw part of the havoc it had made. Loaded coal cars were lifted and thrown off the track and the walls which were built up in the entrances along each side of the heading were blown out by the concussion. Before reaching the fall, we met twenty-five or thirty men running in towards the face of the heading. I asked them what the trouble was, and they said the mine was all caved in and there was no means left for our escape, across the faces of the chambers where we had confidently expected to reach the air slope at the outcropping of the vein. This was a great discouragement to all of us, as we did not expect to be able to get out by going down into No. 1 level as we thought it would be surely closed in, as we imagined that the fall had started from it; on account of it squeezing so that there was no persons working there excepting the party propping. In the chamber below the plane level through which we had to pass, it had partially broken down, and the breaking of the roof was making a great noise, and threatening to fall down, but the party clung closely to the heading as there was no fear of it breaking down, but when some of us would start out to the entrance occasionally, all would follow out, and it took some little time to get them all quiet. When we approached the entrance to hear how it was working, it made such a noise that none dared to venture through it. I proposed that as all means were cut off, from getting out at the outcrop, that we should try to go through the fall or falling ground, and try to get out at some of the lower levels, but we should go in small parties of three or four together, for fear of running over and killing one another, in case of a piece of rock falling upon, or beside us, but the great body of the men were not in favor of that, and some of them said let us all stay, or go out together. I said I would not go out in that way, but would go with the first party, or stay until the last. / About this time, my father, Alexander Bryden, the mine foreman, found his way into us and called upon us to come out. You may be sure it was a welcome call to all of us, and we lost no time in responding to it. When the last of the party reached him he asked if there was any other person left in the mine alive. Some the men said that Dennis Farrell was at the face of the chamber severely injured across the spine so that he could not walk. My father asked if any of the men would go in with him to carry him out, but none of those who came in with him, nor those that were in before would go, as they feared that the place they had to pass through would cave in before their return. But this did not keep my father from going, so he went in alone, and carried him out to a point where the others could come to his assistance. The distance he had to carry him would be about a quarter of a mile, and the others carried him out upon a board, about a mile and a quarter, to daylight, and from thence to his home. Dennis Farrell was found under a large piece of coal when the miners passed through his chamber. They rolled the coal off him and when they found he could not walk, they set him up in the corner of his chamber, and gave him a light and left him, as they did not know how they were

going to get out themselves. / After the piece of coal fell upon Dennis, his brother John, who was working with him, ran into the next chamber to get help to roll the chunk of coal from him and while he was gone the fall came and John was caught by it and was never more seen either alive or dead. / The passage through which we made our way out, between the plane heading and level heading, did not remain open very long after we got out, and it was entirely closed up when the searchers went in after noon of that day and it was not opened again until about a year after. The force of the expelled air at points along the levels was so great that it broke up the cars along the road into small pieces. One driver boy was killed by its force and others were severely injured. / My father with searching parties kept up the search for several days. On the morning of the third day they found John Hosie, mine foreman in one of the headings in the dark. He lost his light when the cave took place and he had been wandering around doing what he could to find the way out. The place in which he was found was visited by the searchers the day before, but he was not there. When found by my father he could only say two words, 'Oh Bryden,' when his heart failed him and he broke into tears. He no doubt had suffered more than any one caught in the fall, as he was in darkness and danger for forty-eight hours. During all this time his young wife was in great distress, on account of his loss, and never expected to see him in life again. While Mr. Hosie was in the darkness and gloom he kept his watch running so that he knew how the time was passing, by feeling the hands of his watch, and it was found out afterwards that he had written on some of the pillars with white chalk, that he was at that point at a certain time of the day, but the searching parties failed to see the writing, when they passed through the entrances, at those points. You may imagine the condition of a man who has been feeling his way over rocks and coal in the dark, for the length of time he had, his hands were torn and bleeding, and his clothes in rags. / In the heading in which I worked we left a fine bay horse which had been in the mines but a few days. We had to leave him in the mines to starve or die for want of air. / After the place was opened up again a year after, I went in to get my tools, and had the curiosity to hunt the remains of the poor horse, and found his bones in a place where the roof was low it having been squeezed down from seven feet to less than four feet high. I also examined along the edges of the fall towards the outcrop, to see whether there was any way to escape in that direction, but I found all closed down tight. On the plane, heading and chambers the fall broke off in what we called the rock roof, where there was no slate over the coal. At some points the hard sandstone rock was broken off, along the pillars almost as square, as if it had been sawed. The strength of this rock was no doubt the cause of the extensive cave. The roof had broken away, at some weak point, and extended into the hard rock where it could not break off in a small space and so it came over a large area, crushing out pillars and everything in its way in an instant, after it got a fair start. When I went into the mine about 6 o'clock in the morning I heard no indications of a squeeze or fall of roof until the sudden crash came. / This accident having occurred fifty-three and one-half years ago it is not likely that many now live, who were in the mine at the time, and I am often asked to have the account of the accident published in the papers, so that an account of it may be preserved, from one, who was in the mine at the time, of the fall, which entombed so many men, and cast a gloom over the whole community, as well, as the families with which they were connected. / The company through their officers, superintendents, foremen, and workmen, did everything that could be done, to find the bodies of those entombed, and they were successful in

getting the bodies of eight out of the fourteen. The others were at too great a distance into the fall, and their scattered conditions so uncertain, that after about six weeks search for them, they gave up in despair of reaching any more of them./ This being about the first cave, of such extent and loss of life, in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, it cast a gloom over the whole country." (*Carbondale Leader*, September 23, 1899, p. 2)

- **[One Hero, Many Non-Heroes]** From the initial account of the 1846 mine cave-in that was published in the January 16, 1846 *Carbondale Democrat*, we learn that Dennis Farrell was nearly killed in the initial fall by coal and stones falling upon him. To relieve him, his brother, John Farrell, ran to get an iron bar, and was never seen again. When Alexander Bryden, at the head of a rescue party, entered the mine and located 18 men in a gallery or heading about a mile from the mouth of the mine, he learned from them that Dennis Farrell, badly wounded, lay at the face of the chamber four or five hundred feet off in the most dangerous part of the fall. Farrell, wholly disabled by a spinal injury and unable to walk, had been liberated by two of the 18 men from the stones and coal that had fallen on him, and then placed against the side of the mine by the two men who removed the stones and coal upon him. Those two men, together with the other 16, then "ran for their lives, from under the falling mass." In the account by the Honorable Henry S. Randall (as reported in the obituary of Alexander Bryden) of Bryden's behavior during the rescue efforts following the cave-in, we learn that when Bryden learned, from the 18 men in the gallery about a mile from the mouth of the mine where he located them, that they had abandoned Dennis Farrell to die and ran for their lives, he, Alexander Bryden, then asked if any of the 18 would go back with him to rescue Farrell. Not one of the 18 nor any among those who came in with Bryden during the rescue efforts came forward. Bryden, "with a word of indignant censure to the men for not bearing their wounded comrade with themselves to the gallery where he found them, . . . pointed out their path, bade them escape, and then turning back, entered a path more perilous and difficult than his preceding one." Bryden then went in the additional four or five hundred feet and rescued Dennis Farrell and literally carried and dragged Farrell to a point where the others could come to his assistance. The others then carried Farrell out upon a board, about a mile and a quarter, to daylight, and from thence to his home. The fortitude, courage, and heroism of Alexander Bryden can not be praised enough. As for the behavior of the 18 men who abandoned their comrade, Dennis Farrell, to die and then ran for their lives, "a word of indignant censure" (such as they received from Alexander Bryden at the time) hardly seems sufficient.

More on the non-heroes: *Miller and Sharpless*, pp. 132-33: "Despite their independence, miners were noted for their group solidarity. Highly individualistic though they might be, the working conditions in the mines forced them into close dependency on each other. They had to cooperate under dangerous circumstances. And miners expressed their solidarity in various ways. If a miner was injured, his friends took up a collection for him, sometimes even among workers on

another shift. Occasionally when a miner was badly injured the other workers walked off the job in protest or simply in sympathy for the injured man. According to one of the most noble traditions, miners immediately volunteered for rescue operations, no matter how hazardous they might be. A miner who was trapped expected others to rush to his rescue and to persist until all hope was lost; he knew that others expected the same from him as well. For miners who did not conform to these unwritten rules working conditions could be made intolerable. Such men were given the silent treatment or, worse, found themselves without help when they needed it.” (quoted from Alvin W. Gouldner, *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy*, 1954, p. 129)

10. Fourteen Killed:

Six bodies found and buried, five of which were identified: Patrick Walker, Mark Brennan, Patrick Mitchell, William Clines, and unidentified remains of a fifth miner--all Irish and all Roman Catholic, all buried in the Old Catholic Cemetery, later moved to the New Catholic Cemetery. Ebenezer Williams--Welsh, protestant; buried in Maplewood Cemetery. (Patrick Walker and Mark Brennan found: see January 30, 1846 issue of *Carbondale Democrat*; Patrick Mitchell, William Clines and Ebenezer Williams found, see February 6, 1846 issue of *Carbondale Democrat*)

Mark Brennan was the great grandfather of Mrs. Patricia Brennan Cobb, living on South Church Street in Carbondale in 2003.

Eight bodies never found: Patrick Leonard, Henry ("Harry") Moore, James Magrath, John Brennan, Peter Crowley (possibly "Crawley"), Anthony Walsh, Michael Toolan (possibly "Tolan"), Herny Devanney (possibly "Devany"), John Farrell: these eight were all Irish and all Roman Catholic.

When the Old Catholic Cemetery (Belmont Street) was closed and the bodies interred therein removed to the New Catholic Cemetery (Russell Park), a large monument, surrounded by 13 individual stones, in memory of the 13 Roman Catholic miners killed in this 1846 cave-in, were placed in the New Catholic Cemetery. It is known for certain that the earthly remains of Ebenezer Williams were interred in Maplewood Cemetery, Carbondale, although a tombstone (if there is one) has not yet been located.

See also, two disturbingly non-ecumenical, melodramatic, and less than historically accurate articles, both by Robert A. Hecht, that were published in the *Carbondale News* in 2003: "St. Rose Cemetery marks local mine disaster in 1846" (September 3, 2003) and "Mine monument will be relocated to original site; personal stories recalled of 1846 mine collapse" (October 8, 2003).

- Patrick Clark, a driver, very badly injured, died the following day, January 13, 1846
- Hugh Fitzpatrick and John M'Kale: thrown violently against the cars; broken bones; not mortally injured
- John Hosie: trapped in mines for two days; got out alive
- Dennis Farrell: very badly injured; rescued by Alexander Bryden
- Roderick Phillips: trapped in mine for 24 hours; rescued by Alexander Bryden, Phillips "died suddenly of heart failure some time afterwards the cause of which was attributed to his uncomfortable confinement in the mine."

Also: clipping in Gritman scrapbook, dated Saturday, January 4, 1896:

"50 YEARS AGO. / An Extensive Cave-In That Occurred in This City. / Sixteen Mine Workers Lost Their Lives in the Fall of Earth and Rock. / Probably one of the most interesting and engaging persons in our city today is Michael Boland, an aged and respected citizen who lives in the neighborhood of Brooklyn street. Doubtless there are some other persons in Carbondale who will remember the terrible mine fatality which occurred at Hosie mines in the neighborhood No. 1 slope on Monday, January 6, 1846,--just fifty years ago next Monday. / A LEADER reporter yesterday interviewed Mr. Boland and was told a story which was every entertaining, yet filled with horror. The result of that fateful day brought suffering and desolation to many homes whose loved ones fell victims to the extensive cave-in. / When Mr. Boland was asked by the newsgatherer whether he remembered the occurrence he replied: 'I do, and very well, sir,' and continuing told the following story: 'It was Monday morning about nine o'clock, just fifty years ago this coming Monday, when sixteen employes of the Hosie mine gave up their lives without a moment's notice. The men went to their work that morning in their usual good spirits and when the fall came it was so sudden and unexpected that it caused the wildest terror and excitement. / 'The fall of earth and rock was one of the largest ever known and covered a territory of nearly half a mile square. / 'The settling of the earth shook the whole mine and large pieces of rock and coal fell from all sides. The wind caused by the fall extinguished our lamps and left us all in darkness and there was a horrible stampede of humanity for a place of safety. Frantic men rushed to and fro striking against each other in their mad efforts to get out to the light of day. Some of the men had their clothes nearly torn from them and many of them were injured by running against obstructions and the sides of the mine. / 'The cries of men who were pinned to the earth were heard but their piteous pleadings for help were passed by apparently unheard, so anxious was each to save his own life.' / 'Do you remember the names of the miners who were the victims?' asked the reporter. 'Yes,' said Mr. Boland; 'There was Harry Moore, Peter Crawley, Patrick Leonard, Ebenezer Williams, Patrick Clark, Michel Toolan, John Farrell, two miners named McGrath and Brennan, and a laborer whose name could not be learned; a prop boy named Patrick Walker, and five other laborers whose names never were known. The latter five men had just come to work that morning and their names had not yet been entered upon the time books of the company. / 'One of the miners named Dennis Farrell was caught by a large piece of rock falling upon both of his legs His brother John who was working with him had been thrown

down and rendered partially unconscious. When he recovered his senses he at once set about to relieve his brother. He groped about the mine for a bar, hoping that he might raise the rock. When but a few away from his brother a portion of the roof fell upon him and killed him instantly. When the body was recovered some days later he was found with the bar clutched in his hands. Farrell was afterward released by a man named Bryden. / 'In the meantime,' continued Mr. Boland, 'most of the men had succeeded in getting out of the mine, myself included, and the news of that terrible cave in was spread and was soon known for miles around, mothers, wives, sisters, brothers, children and friends soon flocked to the mine and the scene was one which I shall never forget. / 'The cries of the women whose loved ones had fallen victims was heart rending and their sufferings would wring the stoutest heart. The officials of the mines soon had gangs of men at work clearing away the mass of earth, in hopes that some lives might be saved. / 'Searching parties were organized and I was one of a party who went into the mine in the hope that we might find some men who had lost their bearings. John Hosie was one of the missing ones and we knew that he was not under the fall. On the following Wednesday we found the following inscription upon a mine rail written with chalk: John Hosie is alive, in want of oil, no light. / 'Soon after that we heard a shout and a little later we found Hosie nearly exhausted by the efforts he had made to reach the outside. He had with him a dinner pail filled with edibles, but so confused was he that he had not eaten anything. When he was taken to the mouth of the mine he fainted. / 'He was removed to his home and doctors Rafferty and Dixon, the practicing physicians in Carbondale, were called to attend him. In the meantime, knowing that the men were all dead, a coffin was made for each one of them and as an arm or some portion of a body was reached, the alarm was given and the body removed. The only possible way we could identify the men was by having; the women who lost loved ones identify them by their clothes or some mark known only to them. / 'When the boy Patrick Walker was reached he was found in a crevice but was not under the fall although he had been injured. When the searchers found him he was in a sitting position, with his hands clasped above his head, and he evidently died of starvation or fright, or was suffocated. / 'How many bodies of the victims were recovered? Asked the reporter. / 'Eight,' replied Mr. Boland. 'The others are today where the fall occurred. As soon as they were found they were buried in the old Catholic graveyard where the parochial residence now stands. Ebenezer Williams, a Welshman, was buried in the Protestant cemetery. / Mr. Boland cited other instances connected with the catastrophe, all of which are entertaining but time will not permit us to mention them. The reporter found Mr. Boland a ready talker and extremely courteous. He is one of Carbondale's most esteemed citizens and although somewhat advanced in years, he is at present enjoying the best of health and has bright prospects to live many years, to enjoy the proceeds of years of industry and toil. / Among some of our oldest residents who doubtless remember the occurrence are John Lacken of Brooklyn street and Anthony Scott of Fallbrook street but the majority of persons who worked in the mine at that time have passed away."

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